



A NEW THANKSGIVING

by JAMES W. BECKMAN

THIS is the week of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving day is an American custom started by the Pilgrims who landed on the new continent and faced hardships which few can realize who are reared in the wealth and luxury of the land today.

The season had been a hard one. Many had died and the prospect of starvation during the cold winter with its ice and snow loomed large. So, when the harvest yielded enough to keep them until another season would produce the necessities of life, they met that last Thursday in November in year 1621, and gave thanks to their God, who had remembered them.

Thankfulness is usually in inverse ratio to the value of the thing for which we give thanks. This is no disparagement of the things we are grateful for; but humanity does not think of thanks until it has felt the terrors of distress.

The rich who live in luxury and ease do not thank with their hearts. Their thanks are but formal expressions of meaningless words. How can words mean anything when one has not felt the things which make for thankfulness?

But the poverty-stricken who have faced starvation pour out thanks from their humble hearts for the things that have saved their lives.

Those who live in gorgeous homes with comfortable fireplaces do not think of thanks. But those who live in the little hovel with big cracks in the walls and grooves about the doors and windows and without fuel, give thanks for the comfort of fire.

We do not prize health until we have lost it, and we do not appreciate life until we have faced the danger of having to give it up.

That which we have we are likely to accept as a matter of course; but be deprived of it and the sudden realization of its value jars our souls like an earthquake.

We are thankful in the full sense of the word for things necessary to life and happiness only when we have had to do without them.

We are not thankful for that to which we are accustomed and accept thoughtlessly. But when we are deprived of the necessities of life and face the hardships, including death, that come as a result, we are thankful with all our heart.

America has more to be thankful for yearly, than any other nation in the world; but our thanks are tempered by the gravity of the sorrow of our neighbors.

The year has not been one of great happiness, peace and prosperity. It is a year of travail for humanity—the travail of a people being born again. But out of it will come a disciplined and sober people; a people who will know the realities of life better.

We will learn that life is a serious matter, and not a silly, slipshod affair. The war has brought us again to an understanding of the terrible earnestness of the thing we call life.

The earth is in process, and we still have earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Humanity, too, is in process, and strife and sorrow and death will continue to be its lot. We must face life resolutely and meet destiny undismayed.

This year we will not be thankful so much for the blessings we have received, for the things that have been given to us—for being pampered by a prodigal Providence—and being relieved of our burdens, as we will be thankful for the strength to bear them.

In the shrine of our hearts our deepest prayer is not that we shall be relieved of our burdens; but that we shall be given the strength to bear them, for we are great in the degree and the manner in which we face our tasks and perform them. The Great Souls are those that have suffered and endured.

Our Thanksgiving this year will be no perfunctory, infantile prattle because of satiety.

This is a year of reckoning with fate; of being thankful if we, ourselves, have not fallen in the wreckage. We are thankful not for what has happened; but for what has not happened.

Life is not a trivial pastime. It is deadly earnest. It is the course that destiny takes, and let us be thankful, not for less of life, but for more of it, and the courage, the fortitude, the strength, and the persistence to meet its difficulties and continue its course undaunted by disaster and unspooled by success.

We are thankful for Character, not charity, and for iron wills that have

not been broken by the inevitable—From the Sunday Magazine.

Is an Old Institution.

Despite popular opinion to the contrary, Thanksgiving day as an institution is not peculiarly American. For history shows that all ancient nations used to celebrate some feast of a thanksgiving nature, while most of the tribes of our American Indians had a big gathering and a harvest feast years before the white man ever set foot on the shores of the new world.

By the Greeks and Romans the festival days in honor of the goddess of agriculture were times of rustic sport, of processions through the fields and the decorating of the home with fruits and flowers. The people of Egypt enjoyed a time of feasting after gathering in their harvests and laid the fruits of the year on the altar of the Goddess Isis.

The Thankful Spirit.

Cultivate the thankful spirit. It will be to thee a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with us no such thing as small mercies; all are great, because the least are undeserved. Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything.—J. R. Macduff.

APRIL JONES GIVES THANKS

by Douglas Malloch

APRIL Jones was the worst grouch in Hometown. Perhaps it was enough to make a man grouchy, to have had parents with no more originality than to name him "April" because April happened to be the month in which he was born. Especially since he had had to go through life with the nickname "Ape," a natural shortening of his longer name, but one that was not so very complimentary.

Yet April had acquired funds, if he hadn't made friends. And he had other riches. Chief among them was June, a daughter, named for her birth-month, like her father. She was well named, too—for she had roses in her cheeks, and eyes that were twin-patches of blue sky. Nearly everybody preferred her to her sister May. Dan Meeker certainly did—or to anyone. April, May and June were the whole Jones family.

As for Hometown, and the kind of town Hometown was, this is the way Harry Dee described it when he went down to the city, and they asked:

"Hometown is the best little town the Lord ever made, but there ain't nobody else ever worked at it much. When he quit, everybody else laid off."



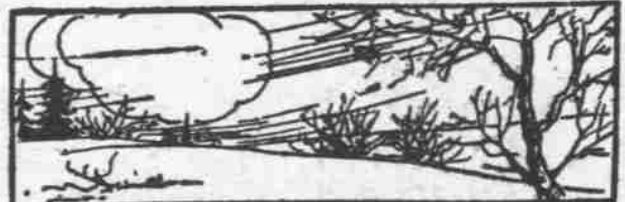
April Jones Said He'd See.

He give us a navigable river, but it ain't never been navigated by anything much but bullheads and canoes. He give us a high hill to shut off the west wind, but there's some of us that ain't been to the top of it yet. He give us good soil, but we're keepin' it more or less of a secret. He give us a lot of natural advantages, and quite a bunch of natural loafers, one of whom I guess I am which. Fact is, he give us a darned sight more than we ever give ourselves. Six days he labored and made Hometown; and it ain't never had any next week since."

Of course, it wasn't as bad as that. Dan Meeker, who had been a tent-boy with a Chautauqua last summer, came home to realize that Hometown had about the best people in the world in it—industrious in their work, honest in

No one in Hometown will forget that Thanksgiving service in the school auditorium. What singing there was by that chorus of nearly thirty voices, mingling in the best old Methodist and Baptist and Congregational hymns! How the preachers vied with each other in eloquence! And when the Methodist minister took up a collection, although nobody knew exactly what for, everybody laughed right out

But that was April Jones' turn to speak. "I don't know whether it's just regular for me to speak now, after these good brothers," said April, "or to speak at all, but I tell you what we are going to do with this money. 'Us folks here in Hometown have got a lot to be thankful for, but we don't know it. We ought to give thanks for these three brothers here, who are pulling the weeds in our little vineyard. We ought to give thanks for our good school. We ought to give thanks for



"Us Folks Have Got a Lot to Be Thankful For."

our good soil, and the good power in our river that we ain't never developed yet. But I tell you what I think about Thanksgiving: I think we ought to give something more besides giving thanks!

"There's a young fellow setting down here that has been secretary of our committee of arrangements, who has been gitting off a lot of ideas up at our place about us folks gitting together, and I want to tell you they're sound. I move you that we go into committee of the whole, or something, and that, after we git organized, that Dan Meeker be made secretary of the blamed business, whatever it is."

It didn't take more than a minute to make Dan secretary. They wanted to make April president, but he wouldn't have it. But he would act as treasurer, so the Methodist minister turned over the collection.

"Wait a minute," said April Jones, "you ain't through with this here collection yet. Here's this hill west of town, that sends half the farmers to Spragueville with their produce because it's too hard to haul. How many men'll give a day's work with teams to grade her down?"

Fifty hands went up in the air like bayonets. "Good!" said April Jones. "That's the first thing we tackle. But we're going to git a power plant at the old dam, and we're going to pay off the mortgage on the Methodist church, and do a few more things. And, as for the mortgage, put me down, Mr. Secretary, for two hundred for a starter."

There isn't any mortgage on the Central M. E. church at Hometown, and there is a power plant at the dam, and Dan Meeker is working in the bank. No, April hasn't taken him into partnership.

But June has. (Copyright, 1916, Western Newspaper Union.)

their dealings and kind to their neighbors. But it hadn't any navigable river, Harry to the contrary notwithstanding. The old mill dam below, long out of use since the sawmill was gone, but still in existence, backed the river up for a mile and bred canoes and bullheads.

"Three squares a day have come so easy to most of us here," said Dan to himself, "that we've kind of forgot that there is anything else."

As Thanksgiving approached, the three local pastors began to think about their Thanksgiving services. The choirs were rehearsed, and certain Thanksgiving sermons were dusted off, looked over and re-written. One day the minister of the Methodist church said to his wife:

"There's April Jones. He has more to be thankful for than any of us, as far as this world's goods go. Wouldn't it be a fine thing to get Ape out to our Thanksgiving meeting?"

His wife immediately said it would—and she couldn't help wondering if it might not ultimately have some effect on her husband's back salary—although it was a worldly thought. So that very afternoon her husband called at the bank and invited April Jones.

April Jones said he'd see—and he was so decent about it that the minister told his wife that April Jones was a misjudged man. The Baptist pastor saw them through the bank window and, as May taught in the Baptist Sunday school and June sang in the choir, he decided that it would be no more than right to drop in and have a talk with their father and mention the Thanksgiving services.

"The absence of our leading citizen," said the pastor, "would throw cold water on the whole service."

"Well, a little cold water ain't going to hurt a Baptist, is it?" asked April, with something that approached a chuckle. And, not quite so pleasantly, he said he would see.

April Jones was a suspicious person; and that night when Dan asked him if he wouldn't come to the Congregational service, he roared:

"What are you fellows up to? I ain't no heathen, that you have to start

THANKSGIVING DAY

That we're at peace with all the world
Safe in our cities and our homes,
That unto this, our favored land,
Such gift, with all its blessings, comes,
That men go not to war and death,
That women do not fearful brood
By anxious hearths for dear ones gone,
We thank Thee, Giver of all good.

That no ambitious strife is ours,
That lust of conquest does not thrill
This mighty nation's inmost heart,
That we abhor to burn and kill,
That weaker nations we protect,
Fight but to make their wronging cease,
And only comes to make them free,
We thank Thee, God of love and peace.

That in the stress around us now,
We feel our hearts with pity throbb,
And haste to heal the wounded man
To hush the child and woman's sob,
That we are eager still to share
The goods that heap our stores again,
With those who have but us to help,
We thank Thee, Father of all men!

missionarying me!"

It took a little time to convince him that there was no conspiracy of cordiality against him. Suddenly the old fellow got up, raised one finger at arm's length above his head, and said:

"I tell you what I'm-going to do: I ain't going to any of 'em, and I'm going to 'em all!" And with this paradoxical pronouncement he stomped off to bed.

Next morning April Jones sent the cashier to ask the three clergymen to meet him at the bank.

"I'm much obliged to you all for your invitations," he said, while the Congregationalist looked at him mystified, and the Methodist and Baptist looked at each other, "but I can't be in no three places at once. That shows you the ruinous effect of competition. Now, I'm going to suggest this: Let's open up the school auditorium and have one big, bang-up Thanksgiving service and invite the whole town!"

"And we'll have three choirs get together up at June's house tomorrow night," suggested Dan, "and practice each other's hymns!"

So one idea suggested another, and before Thursday arrived the whole town had been invited, and had agreed to come.

THANKSGIVING PRAISE.

For summer's bloom and autumn's blight,
For bending wheat and blasted maize,
For health and sickness, Lord of light,
And Lord of darkness, hear our praise!

We trace to thee our joys and woes—
To thee of causes still the cause—
We thank thee that thy hand bestows;
We bless thee that thy love withdraws.

We bring no sorrows to thy throne;
We come to thee with no complaint,
In providence thy will be done,
And that is sacred to the saint.

Here, on this blest Thanksgiving night,
We raise to thee our grateful voice;
For what thou doest, Lord, is right;
And, thus believing, we rejoice.

Before Adam.—"Who is the first man mentioned in the Bible?"
"Chap 1."—Boston Transcript.

The Last Thing.—"Perkins is down and out, isn't he?"
"Oh, yes—he told me the other day he was paying cash for everything."—Life.

Court—Lawyer—"Do you drink?"
Witness (quite bluff)—"That's my business."
Lawyer—"Have you any other business?"—Widow.

Not on Her List.—He—"Do you remember Horatius at the bridge?"
She—"I don't think I ever met him. You know, we invite so few men to our card parties."—Stray Stories.

An Optimist.—He—"Good heavens, the clock just struck one, and I promised your mother I'd leave at 12."
She (comfortably)—"Good! We've eleven hours yet."—Yale Record.

Just Deserts.—Wife—"This paper tells of a man out in Ohio who lives on onions alone."
Hub—"Well, any one who lives on onions ought to live alone."—Boston Transcript.

Behind the Times.—"I hear that all of the clever writers are deserting the magazines to write for the movies."

"You were misinformed; the clever writers haven't been in the magazines for some time now."—Puck.

Foiled Her.—Meeker—"Didn't I always give you my salary check the first of every month?"
Mrs. Meeker—"Yes, but you never told me that you got paid on the 1st and 15th, you embezzler."—New York Globe.

IF YOUR CHILD IS CROSS,
FEVERISH, CONSTIPATED

Look Mother! If tongue is coated,
cleanse little bowels with "California Syrup of Figs."

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